

Message Text

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PAGE 01 LONDON 18504 171314Z

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ACTION AF-08

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INFO USMISSION GENEVA PRIORITY

AMEMBASSY PRETORIA

AMEMBASSY LUSAKA

AMEMBASSY MAPUTO

AMEMBASSY DAR ES SALAAM

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY GABORONE

AMEMBASSY LAGOS

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GENEVA FOR WISNER

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, RH, UK

SUBJECT: BRITISH PRESS ON GENEVA TALKS, NOVEMBER 17

1. COVERAGE TODAY SUGGESTS THAT THE APPARENT DEADLOCK OF THE GENEVA TALKS IS TEMPORARY AND THAT THE CONFERENCE WILL BE ABLE TO MOVE AHEAD.

2. TIMES CORRESPONDENT ALAN MCGREGOR IN GENEVA: "THE PROTRACTED DEADLOCK OVER THE INDEPENDENCE DATE IN THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE (YESTERDAY) ERUPTED INTO A FULL CONFRONTATION BETWEEN THE ZIMBABWE PATRIOTIC FRONT AND MR. IVOR RICHARD, THE BRITISH CHAIRMAN OF THE CONFERENCE."

3. THE TIMES ALSO RUNS A NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE BY

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PAGE 02 LONDON 18504 171314Z

BERNARD GWERTZMAN ON HOW "KISSINGER MESSAGE...MADE MR.

SMITH ACCEPT HIS PLAN."

4. GUARDIAN WASHINGTON CORRESPONDENT JONATHAN STEELE REPORTS ON THE NEW YORK TIMES KISSINGER/RHODESIA ARTICLE AND ADDS: "...US OFFICIALS ARE NOW CONGRATULATING THEMSELVES THAT DESPITE (PROBLEMS), THE GENEVA NEGOTIATIONS WERE ABLE TO GET GOING. THERE IS SOME CAUTIOUS OPTIMISM HERE THAT THE QUESTION OF RHODESIA'S INDEPENDENCE DATE HAS BEEN TEMPORARILY SETTLED AND THE CONFERENCE CAN MOVE AHEAD."

5. GUARDIAN CORRESPONDENT JAMES MACMANUS IN GENEVA: "THE RHODESIA CONFERENCE WAS LEFT IN LIMBO (YESTERDAY) AFTER THE TWO NATIONALIST DELEGATIONS OF THE PATRIOTIC FRONT REJECTED WHITEHALL'S TIMETABLE FOR INDEPENDENCE, SHARPLY CRITICIZED CHAIRMAN...RICHARD AND ATTACKED THE BRITISH GOVERNMENT BUT DID NOT FINALLY ABANDON THE MEETING."

6. FINANCIAL TIMES GENEVA CORRESPONDENT DAVID EGLI: "THE DANGEROUS RIFT BETWEEN BRITAIN AND THE AFRICAN PATRIOTIC FRONT DELEGATIONS OVER BRITAIN'S REFUSAL TO SET A FIRM DATE FOR RHODESIAN INDEPENDENCE WITHIN A YEAR (HAS THREATENED THE FINAL BREAKDOWN OF THE TALKS. DESPITE THIS APPARENT DEADLOCK, SOME AFRICAN DELEGATES BELIEVE THAT IF BRITAIN CAN NOW FIND A WAY OF SETTING A SPECIFIC DATE FOR THE TERMINATION OF THE CONFERENCE HERE, THIS COULD PRODUCE THE BREAKTHROUGH NOW DESPERATELY NEEDED TO SAVE THE TALKS. A MOVE THUS TO SEAL THE END OF THE CONFERENCE WOULD CERTAINLY MAKE MR. NKOMO MORE AMENABLE TO CONTINUATION OF THE TALKS, AND COULD BRING THE FRONT DELEGATIONS INTO LINE WITH BRITISH PROPOSALS."

7. DAILY TELEGRAPH CORRESPONDENT DAVID ADAMSON IN GENEVA: "IT WAS...APPARENT THAT WHILE THE TALKS WERE DEADLOCKED SO FAR AS MR. NKOMO AND MR. MUGABE WERE CONCERNED, THEY COULD STILL GO AHEAD WITH THE THREE OTHER DELEGATIONS."

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PAGE 03 LONDON 18504 171314Z

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